

Before and After School Care

The Texas Catholic Conference ***supports access to quality, affordable before and after school care in public and private schools.***

Child care is essential to helping families work and ensuring the full development of young children...Parents, earning between \$5.50 and \$10 an hour, simply cannot afford the full cost of even the least expensive child care. The supply of good quality, affordable child care must be fostered, developed and continually subsidized to allow low-income parents to work and support their families above the poverty line. (*U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development, Child Care policy page*)

A Texas Bishop Speaks:

"Children throughout Texas deserve to be well-cared for in safe, high quality, and affordable child care settings. In many cases, public and private schools are best able to provide this continuity of care through low-cost or free before- and after-school care."



-Bishop James Tamayo, Diocese of Laredo

Church Teaching

- ★ In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, and a great respect and generous concern for their rights. This is true for every child, but it becomes all the more urgent the smaller the child is and the more it is in need of everything, when it is sick, suffering or handicapped. (*Pope John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio*)
- ★ The child is a member of the most basic of all human communities, the family, and is the embodiment of the history of the past and the hope of the future... The time has come for all of society to affirm its belief in the value and significance of children and the contributions they make to the human family. Both the good of the family and the future of society dictate that the rights of children be respected and protected by law, and national economic strategies must see the benefits accorded children as investments in the future. It is only when nations place a high value on the child that the sacredness of human life at every stage of its development and in every situation will be truly respected. (*Msgr. James T McHugh, Children: Do We Care?*)
- ★ Families have the right to measures in the social domain which take into account their needs, especially in the event of the premature death of one or both parents, of the abandonment of one of the spouses, of accident, or sickness or invalidity, in the case of unemployment, or whenever the family has to bear extra burdens on behalf of its members for reasons of old age, physical or mental handicaps or the education of children. (*Charter of the Rights of the Family*)
- ★ What is at stake in childhood and 'n concern for the child is the fate and the destiny of the person, of human life and existence. The child is a sign of the mystery of life and a testing-ground of the authenticity of our respect for the mystery of life. Every child is in some way a sign of the hope of humanity. He or she is a sign of the hope posited and expressed by the love of parents: a sign of the hopes of a nation and a people. (*Pope John Paul II, Meeting with the Executive Council of UNICEF*)

Resources

- ★ **Child Care Resources Page** USCCB (www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/national/childcare.shtml) Source
- ★ **Child Care Services Texas** Workforce Commission (www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/ccinfo.html)
- ★ **About Child Care Licensing** Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care)

The Texas Catholic Conference (TCC) is the association of the 15 Roman Catholic dioceses of the State of Texas, and is the Official Public Policy Voice of the Catholic Bishops of Texas.

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Before and After School Care

The Texas Catholic Conference supports access to safe, educational child care for all children as well as additional training requirements for child care workers and adequate public funding of broad-based and inclusive child care and other essential services needed by families, especially poor families.

Texas School-Based After School Care

Before and after school care in Texas is regulated by the Human Resources code. Programs that operate outside of public and accredited private school settings are required to be licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The importance of accountability and standards in after school care is critical to for the safety of children in these programs. Currently, before and after school programs operating in educational facilities that are accredited by the Texas Education Agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or an accreditation body that is a member of the Texas Private School Accreditation, are exempt from being licensed under these standards provided that one of these accrediting organizations approves the before or after school curriculum.

These school-based programs are often able to operate at a lower cost to parents because of the use of school facilities and the ability to raise additional public and private funds to subsidize the program costs. In many Texas communities the only available, affordable programs are those that operate under this model. The Texas Catholic Conference supports these programs and will support efforts to address the accountability of these programs at the local level.

School Based After School Care Program Highlightⁱ

PASAR is Plano ISD's after-school care program for students in grades K-5, located on all elementary campuses. PASAR has 3 components to the program: after school care, holiday care and a summer program. This program is self-supported through tuition and fees. PASAR provides a safe environment on the child's home campus - no traveling in buses or vans. Employees are employed by PISD and have been cleared through a security and background check and receive ongoing safety and behavior management training. Children can participate in regular school activities, tutorials and clubs before going to PASAR. Opportunities are given for students to work on homework, and participate in structured recreational and fine arts activities to enhance their overall skill development. Students must be enrolled at the school where they are participating in PASAR and fees must be prepaid for student participation in the program. Reduced tuition is offered to children in the free or reduced lunch program and children of district employees. Monthly fees for this program range from \$101 to \$260 per student.

Child Care Necessary for a Stronger Workforceⁱⁱ

Child care plays a pivotal role in parents'—especially mothers'—efforts to prepare for and sustain employment. Some literature indicates that child care represents a powerful influence in parents' work situations. In particular, parents cite inability to arrange sufficient child care as a major cause of missed work days and inability to maintain employment. In addition, parents' workplace productivity declines when they do not feel secure in the child care arrangements they have made. To ensure that parents keep their jobs, maintain productivity, and remain self-sufficient, they must have access to affordable, reliable, flexible, and safe child care. Quality child care is truly an effective component of workforce development strategy when it ensures that parents can afford care they believe will protect and promote the well-being of their children and that will accommodate their demanding and often nonstandard work schedules.

(Last updated August 23, 2010, 82nd Legislative Session)

ⁱ Plano ISD After School Care Program. www.pisd.edu/parents/program.pasar/index.shtml

ⁱⁱ Landry, Ph.D., Susan H. *Effective Early Childhood Programs: Turning Knowledge into Actions*. Rep. University of Texas Houston Health Science Center, Texas Program for Society and Health, The James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, 2006. Web. 13 Aug. 2010. <www.childrenslearninginstitute.org/documents/effective-early-childhood-programs.pdf>.